



Presenter Biographies

KEYNOTES

Pam Gerwe and Mike Jopek

Pam Gerwe and Mike Jopek have been farming in Whitefish for the past 20 years. Gerwe is past president of AERO –Alternative Energy Resource Organization. She is founding member of Nourish the Flathead – a food advocacy organization. Gerwe organized Flathead farmers via the FarmHands map – connecting people with working lands. Jopek is a retired state Legislator. He is a founding member of Whitefish Legacy Partners –stewardship, recreation and conservation organization focused on state public lands. Gerwe and Jopek are full time farmers and grow food.

Frank Greer

Frank Greer, the founding partner of GMMB, has more than 35 years of experience in communications and advertising. He has provided counsel and communications services to public interest causes and foundations, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and major efforts on education reform and environmental protection. Frank has also provided strategic advice to the campaigns of President Obama, President Clinton, and numerous governor, Senate, and congressional races across the country. Internationally, he assisted with the election of Guatemalan President Alvaro Colom in 2007, advised then-presidential candidate Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress in 1993, served as campaign media advisor to Czechoslovakian President Vaclav Havel in 1990, and assisted Chile's pro-democracy campaign in 1987.

In 1972, Frank was a founder and board member of Amnesty International USA. After attending the University of Maryland, he created and directed the Public Media Center in San Francisco, the nation's first public interest advertising agency.

Jeremy Smith

Jeremy N. Smith is an award-winning writer and popular public speaker whose articles have appeared in *Gourmet*, *Sunset*, *Montana Magazine*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, among many other publications. His

new book, *Growing a Garden City*, was selected as one of Booklist's top 10 books on the environment for 2011. He lives and works in Missoula, Montana.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS (in alphabetical order)

Auer, Jim

Jim Auer is the AmeriCorps Grants Coordinator for the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service. Prior to his current position he served as an AmeriCorps*VISTA with the Montana Legal Services Association and was placed with Montana Credit Unions for Community Development.

Bopp, Clair

Clair Bopp came to Montana from Ohio to serve in the Montana Conservation Corps and now, in her second term as an AmeriCorps member, she serves with the Justice for Montanans Project. Through this program, Clair has been developing a comprehensive, statewide guide of veterans' service providers.

Burnett, Gary

Gary Burnett has 25 years of experience in natural resource management and nonprofit development. He has worked with and for public and private landowners/managers, and is experienced in land protection and stewardship, prescribed fire, natural areas, wildlife and habitat management. He has developed and directed annual fund, major gift and planned giving programs for three national organizations. Gary currently serves as the Blackfoot Challenge's Executive Director.

Busch, Amy

Amy Busch is the Montana State Program Specialist for the Corporation for National & Community Service. Prior to joining the CNCS Montana Field Office in 2007, she worked with CNCS Senior Corps programs for over 20 years, has been a consultant and grant writer, was appointed to the Governor's Commission on Community Service, and has served on several other boards and associations across the state

Chandler, Nedra

Nedra has worked as a mediator of conflict and facilitator of public decisions since 1990 and has done community outreach and public involvement work since 1985. Nedra was active through the '90s and into the turn of this century in several national associations including the Association for Conflict Resolution and also served as editorial board member for the International Association of Public Participation. Nedra holds a degree in political science from Montana State University, a masters in geography from University of Washington, a graduate certificate in mediation from UW and is currently working on a masters in public health student through the University of Montana. She now leads the nutrition and physical activity program with a strong focus on healthy communities.

Chapman, Samsara

Samsara Chapman is a Montana native who works toward getting people of all ages excited about being outdoors. She grew up in Helena and has been greatly influenced by experiences in the surrounding woods and open spaces. Her passion is to introduce younger generations to responsible outdoor use ethics and does this by working with community mentors for outings. She has a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and three years of post-baccalaureate studies at the University of Montana in human/non-human interaction ethics. Sam has been in the Education Coordinator position for the Montana Discovery Foundation over the past 10 years. A large part of this job is working with an outstanding volunteer pool to provide educational opportunities to schools, groups, and the general public.

Cowan, Devin

Devin Cowan recently returned to Montana after several years exploring New York and Colorado and he is glad to be back! Growing up in Bozeman instilled Devin with a wanderlust for the outdoors and a conviction: the task of preserving Montana's wild places is a dynamic responsibility. While attending Engineering School, he worked as an instructor for Cornell Outdoor Education, leading expeditions and facilitating at the Cornell Team and Leadership Center. After graduating, Devin studied carbon cycling with the US Geological Survey in Colorado and later served as a Montana Energy Corps AmeriCorps Member with the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. He currently coordinates the Energy Internship Program for the Governor's Office of Community Service.

Day, Toby

Toby Day is the Extension Horticulture Associate Specialist and statewide Master Gardner Coordinator through Montana State University Extension. He earned both his degrees, a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture and Master of Science in Plant Sciences from MSU. Previous to being the Extension Horticulture Associate Specialist for MSU, he was an Extension Agent in Silver Bow County in Butte, Montana for 2 years. Toby has also worked as a landscape project manager, assistant farm manager, owned his own business and is an avid gardener.

Fawns, Wendi

Wendi Fawns has 17 years experience as an educator and youth program developer. Before becoming involved in the area of education, she obtained a degree in Sociology and was employed as an IT Systems Analyst and Human Resource Manager. Currently she combines her diverse career background with a passion for helping youth learn, by overseeing several volunteer staffed service-learning programs in Ravalli County. She also works in collaboration with MAPs Media Institute, Literacy Bitterroot, is a 4-H club leader and an Education Coordinator.

FitzGerald, Bob

Bob FitzGerald is a vibrant member of the Helena community and a long time instigator of change. He has been dedicated to progressive causes that try to lift the human condition including bringing Nobel Peace Laureate Archbishop Tutu to Montana, performing with the political satire band- the Montana Logging and Ballet Company, directing a protestant youth church camp for over 20 years, and fundraising for a variety of social causes across the United States.

Gault, Lee

Lee Gault has been with the Montana Conservation Corps since 1995, 14 years as Program Director. He came to the MCC after 15 years as a counselor, schoolteacher and Outward Bound instructor, where he developed and led courses for Vietnam veterans being treated for PTSD.

Grantham, Tazha

Tazha Grantham joined the Montana Conservation Corps Eastern Wildlands region as Regional Supervisor in June '05. She served with the MCC in '99 in her hometown of Billings. Upon graduation from UM with a criminology degree, she spent several years in the social service arena, working in particular with American Indian children and families and serving as a foster parent. Tazha has enjoyed being part of MCC and is excited to be running a veterans green corps crew for a second consecutive year.

Green, Anna

Anna Green is the First Lady Assistant and Policy Advisor in the Office of Governor Brian Schweitzer. She works primarily coordinating the Governor and First Lady's Math & Science Initiative, which has become the main focus of First Lady Nancy Schweitzer. She has also assisted in education policy work for Governor Schweitzer on areas such as dual-credit, distance learning, and technology in education. She graduated from Colby College in Waterville, Maine, majoring in International Studies with a concentration in development and spent time studying abroad in Ecuador and Oman. She was born and raised in Helena.

Grunzke, Leah

Leah Grunzke is an Americorps VISTA member serving in Dillon, MT. She received her BA in Horticultural Science from MSU-Bozeman, and has spent the last ten years working on community building, sustainable agriculture and outdoor youth education programs in Montana

Kreglo, Adraine

Adraine Kreglo has served as the President and CEO of the Volunteer Center of Manatee County and the Florida Inland Communities since 1994. She has managed more than 40 Volunteer Reception Centers, managing thousands of unaffiliated volunteers after disasters in communities across the world.

Adraine is the recipient of the National Service Leader Award, Daily Points of Light Award and National Eckerd 100 Women of Influence recognition. She serves as a national disaster response trainer and sits on numerous local, state, and national boards for community based organizations and foundations.

She has written several service learning guides to empower young people as decision makers in their communities. Adraine continues to manage one of the nation's largest youth volunteer initiatives, ManaTEENS, engaging thousands of youth as volunteers in SW Florida.

Adraine created Serendipity Solutions as a program of the Volunteer Center to share her grant writing and fund raising expertise with nonprofits nationwide. Since December 2008, Serendipity Solutions has successfully raised more than \$3,345,000 in grant funding for agencies such as Hands On Jacksonville, Hands On Broward, Angel Flight of the USA, and Autism Pensacola.

McCormick, Michael

Michael McCormick is a graduate of George Washington University. Mr. McCormick has more than 30 years of business experience in the fields of publishing and financial services. Before joining the Livingston Food Pantry of Park County, all Mr. McCormick's work experience was in very competitive, profit driven companies.

Paul, Allison

Allison Paul is the Executive Director of the Montana Legal Services Association in Helena, Montana. Under Allison's leadership, MLSA has become well known for its innovative use of technology to provide services to clients. Before moving to Montana, Allison attended law school at the University of Kansas, and was in private practice in Chicago, Illinois.

Plymale, Wendy

Wendy Plymale has worked with several programs of Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC) for almost 10 years. Most recently she started working with RSVP and the Homeless Prevention Program as the Program Manager. She is also the HIPAA Compliance Officer for RMDC.

Reynolds, Melanie

Melanie Reynolds volunteered as a VISTA on the Blackfeet Reservation in 1981, her year of service at the White Buffalo Home on the Blackfeet Reservation in Browning gave her a broad range of experiences that have been tremendously helpful in her career in public health, including her current role as the Health Officer for Lewis and Clark County. That year, Melanie also met Bob Rowe, a fellow VISTA and her future husband. Melanie and Bob chose to raise their family in Montana for the balance of lifestyle and professional opportunities they've found, and thirty years later are happy to call Helena home.

Sachatello-Sawyer, Bonnie

Bonnie Sachatello-Sawyer is the founder and executive director of Hopa Mountain, a nonprofit based in Bozeman that is dedicated to investing in rural and tribal citizen leaders, adults and youth, who are working to improve education, ecological health, and economic development in their hometowns. Formerly the director of the Native Waters Project at Montana State University, Sachatello-Sawyer has more than 20 years of experience collaboratively developing education projects in the Northern Rockies. An educator by training, she worked for 11 years at the Museum of the Rockies and co-authored Adult Museum Programs: Designing Meaningful Experiences based on a national study. She received her Ed.D. from Montana State University in Adult and Community Education and completed her M.A. in Political Science at the University of Richmond. Her undergraduate degree in Political Science is from Vanderbilt University.

Sanderson, Pam

Pamela Sanderson is the Volunteer Center Director at United Way of Yellowstone County. She has over thirty-five years of volunteer and paid professional experience in governance, management, consulting, training, leadership and direct service positions mostly with community benefit organizations. She has designed and presented training and seminars on volunteer management; board development; fund-raising and group dynamics, development and leadership for more than 100 organizations and by invitation at local, state and national conferences. She currently serves on the United Way Worldwide Volunteer and Employee Engagement Council and previously was an elected representative on the Volunteer Center National Network Council (Points of Light Foundation).

Sarchet, Brent

Brent Sarchet is currently the Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent for Lewis & Clark County. He grew up on a farm/ranch in western Nebraska where he developed his love for agriculture. He received his BS and MS from the University of Wyoming. Prior to joining Montana State University Extension he worked for the Montana Department of Agriculture, was a self-employed farmer, assistant manager at an organic carrot farm in southern California and was a research assistant. Brent is an active gardener, enjoys woodworking, and pretty much enjoys doing anything that involves the outdoors.

Schmidt, Sara

Sara Schmidt is an AmeriCorps Big Sky Watershed Corps member and came on board as the Outreach Coordinator for the Blackfoot Challenge in October 2011. She grew up in the Missoula Valley and after many years away, is thrilled to be back home, working on watershed conservation within the rural communities of the Blackfoot Watershed.

Smith, Jason

Jason Smith volunteered with the AmeriCorps' Campus Corps program at Salish Kootenai College in 2006. During Jason's year of service with AmeriCorps he participated in student senate activities as Vice

President of the student body, tutored students in the local middle school and high school, and facilitated tribal college activities for students and families during the school year. AmeriCorps provided Jason the financial opportunity to complete his college degree, and provided a valuable skill set that he has put to use as the State Tribal Economic Development Program Manager in the Montana Department of Commerce.

Spang, Marissa

Marissa Spang is a member of the Northern Cheyenne and Crow nations. She was raised in Lame Deer, MT and graduated from Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH in 2007 with a Bachelor of Arts in Native American Studies. Marissa has served as Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Dartmouth College, Career Counselor & Scholarship Coordinator at St. Labre Indian Catholic School, Youth Leaders in Service Coordinator at Hopa Mountain, and as the Project Director of the only tribal Promise Neighborhoods at the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Cheyenne Nation. Marissa is currently the Outreach Program Coordinator at Hopa Mountain where she is involved with Strengthening the Circle & other Hopa programs. Marissa has two loving parents, three brothers and three sisters and resides in Bozeman, MT.

Tracy, Linda

As part of her career in nonprofit organizations, Linda Tracy has been a grant writer, proposal reviewer, and grant decision maker at the local, state and federal levels. She has served on the boards of directors of several organizations, including some who leveraged funding from The Steele-Reese Foundation to achieve their objectives. As the Western Director for The Steele-Reese Foundation, she helps tax-exempt entities in Idaho and Montana explore the potential intersections between their objectives and the foundation's priorities. Linda also works for a coalition of nation nonprofit organizations and teaches alpine skiing.

Vail, Betty

Betty Vail is the Miles City RSVP Director for the City of Miles City. Prior to RSVP, Betty worked on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and in the cities of Forsyth and Miles City as a WoRC Case Manager. She has also planned many community events for non-profit organizations including Relay for Life, Volunteer Fire Department, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts of America.

Vorreyer, Kristen

Kristen Vorreyer was born and raised in Helena and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Communication Studies from the University of Montana in Missoula in 2009. Upon graduating Kirsten applied for a position with Montana Conservation Corps and spent the summer building and maintain trail in wilderness areas of western Montana. In the winter of 2010, Kirsten completed a second service term as an AmeriCorps PRC VISTA with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Missoula. Her service as a VISTA led directly to her current employment as CASA's Volunteer Coordinator.

Waiss, Brittany

Biography was not available at the time of posting.

White, Patty

Patty White is the Marketing & Communications Director for the Montana Nonprofit Association. Patty has worked in the nonprofit sector for most of her career, serving as IT Director at Carroll College, Executive Director of the Helena Symphony, Associate Director of the Holter Museum of Art, and Marketing & Communications Director at Carroll College. At MNA, Patty is the project lead on the Build Montana program.

White, Phyllis

Phyllis C. White is president of the 800-member, 30 clubs and 200 junior gardeners composing the MT Federation of Garden Clubs, the largest all-volunteer organization in the state. Phyllis volunteered for VISTA and was a Head Start aide while attending college in Pennsylvania. She helped establish a parent-owned, nonprofit Montessori preschool in Bozeman and managed it for a decade. On the other side of the age spectrum, she established a horticulture therapy program at the Gallatin Rest Home and chaired an award-winning project to build a large sensory garden for the nursing home residents. She has gardened all her life and is now teaching her three grandchildren the joy of fresh picked strawberries.

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